539 he went down in the water; having gone down he worked bringing it up in his claws; all the earth was dissolved.

Thereupon Ṭhąkur called the raghǫṕ boaṛ fish[4]. He came. Having come he said to Ṭhąkur: "Why did you call me, Ṭhąkur?" Ṭhąkur said to him: "Would you be willing to bring up earth?" The raghǫṕ boaṛ fish answered him: "If you tell me to do so, I might bring it up". Then having gone down in the water he bit (the earth); he was bringing some of it in his mouth and some on his back; all the earth was dissolved. Since that time the boaṛ fishes have no scales on their body.

Thereupon Ṭhąkur called the stone-crab. He came. Having come he said to Ṭhąkur: "Why have you called me, Ṭhąkur?" Ṭhąkur said to him: "Would you be willing to bring up earth?" The crab answered Ṭhąkur: "If you tell me to do so, I might bring it up". Then having gone down in the water he worked bringing it up in his claws; all the earth was dissolved.

Thereupon Ṭhąkur called the earthworm. He came. Having come he said to Ṭhąkur: "Why did you call me, Ṭhąkur?" Ṭhąkur said to him: "Would you be willing to bring up earth?" The earthworm answered Ṭhąkur: "If you tell me to do so, I might bring it up, provided the tortoise stands on the water".

Thereupon Ṭhąkur called the tortoise. He came. Having come he said to Ṭhąkur: "Why have you called me, Ṭhąkur?" Ṭhąkur said to him: "No one is able to bring the earth up. The earthworm has promised to bring it up, provided you will stand on the water". The tortoise answered Ṭhąkur: "If you tell me to do so, I might stand. Then he stood on the water. When he had taken his stand there Ṭhąkur chained his four legs in the four directions. The tortoise became immovably quiet on the water. Then the earthworm went down to bring up the earth; he reached the earth. Now he had put his tail on the back of the tortoise, and with his mouth down below he is eating earth, and this he brings out on the back of the tortoise. Then it was spread out and fixed like a hard film. He continued to bring up earth; he brought up enough for the whole earth.[5] Then he stopped.

Thereupon Ṭhąkur caused the earth to be harrowed level. By continual harrowing some was heaped up on the implements; this became mountains. Then when the earth had been brought up and levelled, the foam that was floating on the surface of the water stuck to the earth, and as Ṭhąkur sowed sirom seed[6] on this foam the sirom plant sprang up first (before all other plants). After this he let the dhubi grass[7] be sown and come up; after this the karam tree[8], thereupon the tope sarjǫm, the labaṛ atnaḱ, the laḍea matkǫm[9], and after this all kinds of vegetation. The earth became firm. In all places

[825] [137] [193]

[4] The Santals know a fish called so; this is the Silurus glavis. I know no English name. [5] The foreign influence in the story seems here evident. [6] Sirom is Andropogon muricatus, Retz. [7] The dhubi grass, Cynodon dactylon, Pers. [8] Adina cordifolia, Hook. f. & B. [9] Sarjǫm is Shorea robusta, Gaertn.; the prefixed tope is used in the meaning of "cut off", or, "short"; atnaḱ is Terminalia tomentosa, W. & A.; labaṛ means "highly coloured". Matkǫm is Bassia latifolia, Roxb.; laḍea means "crooked", or, "bent".

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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539 Next Thàkur Jiu ordered the lobster. He also failed. Then came the chance of the "Raghòp'-boar" (*whale*). He tried to bring earth on his back as well [825] as with the mouth. He was also unsuccessful, but as a sign of his efforts, his species have no scales on their backs even to-day.

The crab, summoned next, shared the fate of his predecessors.

Then the Earth-worm came forward. "O Thàkur Jiu," he said, "I can bring up the soil you ask for, if the tortoise stands still on water." The tortoise did as he was requested. He stood on the water with his legs chained.....The Earth-worm came down and reached the subsoil with his tail on the back of the tortoise. He began to eat the soil with his mouth and transmitted it through his hind portion. And thus earth stuck on the back of the tortoise. For a long time, the Earth-worm continued the operations and when he ceased, the earth was created.

At first, the surface was very uneven. Then Thàkur Jiu harrowed the earth. But even then many ridges remained. And they became the hills. The foam, floating on the water, next touched the earth. [824] On it he planted "sirom"[1] (*Andropogon Muricatus*) [412] plants with which broom-sticks are made.

1. Mayurbhanj Santals substituted *Karam* trees (a large forest tree, Adina cordifolia).

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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777 352 Luck attached to a bed is tested in a peculiar way. The interstices between a stringed bed (*khatia*) are counted from its top to bottom, beginning with *ind*, then *cand*, then *jom*, and then *raja*, and so on till the end. If either *raja* or *cand* falls on the last space, the bed is lucky, and if either *ind* or *jom* falls on it, the bed is unlucky.

777 243 825 301 [823] In sowing millets, the luck of preserving the grains from the attack of pests is ensured in a special way. The sower wears a ring made from the scale of the *Harba* (Indian scaly ant-eater). This ring must be cut by a flint to protect its virtue; and should iron be used, it loses all its powers.[1]

Origin of Witch-Craft

754 562 That the Santals have an uncanny faith in Witch-craft is known to many, but little is known about the fact that they consider all women as potential witches, who learnt their art, or rather stole it from Maraṅ Buru, the chief presiding deity, and how men in return learnt the craft of detecting the witches among women.

754 According to the sayings of the Santal patriarchs as we read in *Hòṛkorèn Mare Haṛamko Reak'*

1 Dr. Campbell's *Santali to English Dictionary*, pages 22 and 265.

Bi Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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But the most uncanny part of the whole problem is that they assume human shapes, and thus like to enter into marital union with Santals of the opposite sexes.

A perusal of the stories relating to *Boṅgas* reveals that in their houses the *Boṅgas* have strange coiled up seats as hoods of serpents (*Boṅga gando*, in Mayurbhanj Santali), near which, fearful tigers* and leopards crouch, spreading consternation to the human beings kidnapped. They eat like men, but when their dinner is brought into this earth of ours, lo and behold! it will change into leaves and cow-dung, in the twinkling of an eye. Unions between human beings and *Boṅgas* have their temporal advantages, and we see how during the pendency of a liaison between a Santal and a *Boṅga*-girl, all his affairs prospered beyond expectation.

The *modus operandi* of *Boṅga*-lovers in forming such unions is seen in the story of how a *Boṅga*-girl,

* On this point Mr. Samra Mañjhi of Bantali, Rairangpur, Mayurbhanj stated as follows:—

Some Boṅgas have their serpents, tigers, deer and bears as their workers. The serpents are their seats, the tigers are their dogs, the deer are their oxen and the bears are their servants. The beasts do not always remain in the Boṅgas' house. They roam about the jungles, but they remain under their master's control. Whenever the Boṅga calls on them, they are present, ready to carry out his orders. In Santali, the serpents are called *Boṅga gando*, the tigers are *gutrut sota*, the deer *Koda* and *dari* and the bears are *Kanmi*.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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(Translation)

In the plantain garden
The plant glimmers;
O sister, the leaves quiver and quiver.
In a splendid mansion-like house,
The wife shines in her beauty.

Songs of Birds

If the Santal folk-tales are replete with references to animals, the folk-songs have their share of the Santal's affection for birds. The following verse refers to white-paddy birds:—

Bandale bandale nàtiñ àkin bankdò
Bandale bandale pòsaò àkin beralidò;
Tòkoeraca natiñ àkin bankdò
Cuna raca natiñ àkin bankdò
Cuna raca pòsad àkin beralidò

(Translation)

In every *bundh*, a pair of white paddy birds peck food.
In every *bundh*, a pair of birds get plump by food.
In whose court-yard do the pair of white paddy-birds peck food?
In whose court-yard do the pair of birds get plump?

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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533 In the following poem a boy is pressing his
539 mother to tame a pair of birds:—
•825

Burucetanre kadañ gupi,
Sugasara cenreniñ ciàakat' kin
Cara bànuk' babu, ţena bànuk.'
Sugà-sara cèn*r*èn bàbulañ cekakinà.
Carayo iñgiñ àgui, tenayo iñgiñ benao.
Enrehon, sugà-sara cèn*ţ*enyolañ àsulkinge.

(Translation)

Boy sings:

O mother,
While I was grazing buffaloes on the top of the hill,
I saw a pair of *Suk-sari* birds (there).

The mother replies:

We have no food to give them, no cage to keep them.
What shall we do with the birds, O my son!

Boy sings again:

I myself will bring food and make myself the cage (for them).
Yet, O mother, we shall rear them.

Other Songs

821 As an agricultural people, the hopes and fears
152 of the Santals are knit up with the freaks of weather.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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361 787 The Santals observe certain omens before selecting the site for the village. Below are mentioned a few which are mainly based on what an old Santal guru known as 'Kolean guru' related to the late Rev. L. O. Skrefsurd about ninety years ago.

About half a dozen Santals go inside a forest with a leader to select a site for their village. If they see any [825] of three kinds of quails (a genus of gallinaceous birds to which the domestic fowl belongs) flying over there they say :

"Some day in the future a village founded here will be deserted".

[825] But if they see these birds hatching their eggs or if they come across a tiger on their way or see marks of its paws on the ground they say :

"Some day in the future a village founded here will thrive and become prosperous and we can stay here contentedly".

361 In selecting the site for the village, the Santals are very particular about the following things :—

The ground should not be damp and there should be enough good highland for fields and homestead. There should be enough land for cultivation and water should be readily available.

[344 346 778] In a Santal village two things are very important, one is the Mahajhisthan, the place made for the spirit of the original headman, and the other is the Jahersthan, the scared grove where the Santals worship the Bongas.

344 346 **The Majhisthan :** The Majhisthan or raised platform is an important place for the Santals. They build this place generally, in the centre of the village, near the

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Gosainera, a female deity. This Mowa tree is known as the Lady of the Grove. But it was noticed in the Jahirsthan both in Dumka and Godda area, that at the base of several other Sal trees there were stones which represented the Pukri and other Bongas.

The House : Before constructing the house they test the site by tying a rooster on the site for five days, and if within these five days the cock loses its life they give up the place thinking it to be undesirable. If the rooster remains alive they begin the construction of the house after sacrificing a fowl to Marang Buru.

Before entering the new house the owner of the house brings a mug of water after bathing in a stream nearby and pours a little water in each room. In the room facing east the owner puts three cups of Sal leaves on the floor and pours "Handi" (rice beer) in those cups taking the name of Marang Buru and Pilchu Haram and utters the following words :—

"I have constructed the house by taking your names. See that every thing remains alright".

Mango and jackfruit trees are planted in the adjoining field in the belief that prosperity will come. During the house ceremony widows and divorced women cannot enter the house.

The house and its contents : The house of the Santals is not of varied design and the plan of the main structure is always the same. In some can be found a courtyard in the centre, and rooms on two sides and mud walls on the other two sides. An average house of the Santals measures 15 to 18 feet in the length and 10 to 12 feet in width.

In the Daminikoh area and outside this area of the Santal Parganas two types of houses can be seen.

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their houses, and they shut the doors tight and allow no smoke to escape. 614 184 782

MAL SUB-SEPT.

They may not utter the word Mal when engaged in any religious ceremony or when sitting on a panchayat to determine any tribal question. 614 184

JIHU SUB-SEPT

They may not kill or eat the Jihu or babbler bird, nor may they wear a particular sort of garland known as Jihu Mala from the resemblance which it bears to the babbler's eggs. The Jihu is said to have guided the ancestor of the sept to water when he was dying of thirst in the forest. [825] • [773]

SANKH SUB-SEPT

They may not wear shell necklace or ornaments and are forbidden to eat, carry, cut, or use shell.

JUOI SUB-SEPT

They smear their foreheads with vermilion at the harvest festival and go round asking alms of rice. With the rice thus collected they make cakes which they offer to the gods. 614 184 302 782

MANJHIKHIL SUB-SEPT

The members of this sub-sept are descended from the Manjhi (headman of a village) . e., their ancestor was a Manjhi. 614 184

NAIKEKHIL SUB-SEPT.

The members of this sub-sept claim descent from a village priest.

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614 None of these appear to be associated with the idea of culture heroes as amongst the Amerindians. [538] The folk-lore shows indeed some stories centering round the plants (betel-palm, Panjaun tree, Sabai grass) and animals (tiger, jackal, leopard, crab). Besides these some of the clans' names centre round industrial objects and articles of usefulness such as chain, earthen vessel, etc. These would be more in line with a belief in objects possessing mana and venerated as such and gradually getting associated with exogamous sub-divisions which might have had a hand in the invention or diffusion of those useful objects. There is no [796] seasonal recurring ceremonial round these objects meant for the preservation or propogation of the animals or plants venerated as ancestors, as in Australia. There [784] is indeed some taboo in the use by the particular sub-clan of the plant and animal venerated as its ancestor. The animal and plant thus venerated are taboo to the clans; none can hunt it, nor can they partake of its flesh. But because of the observation of this taboo the Santals are in no sense plant and animal worshippers. [796] It seems that their idea of bongas inhabiting all creeks and corners of nature, has been extended only to the region of certain animals and plants. In the folklore [773] the bongas are generally represented as using seats of • [825] hooded cobras and certain serpents are naturally vene- [262] rated as clan-ancestors; on the other hand, the common water-snake (Dhamna) is eaten by almost all the Santals. Of the animals not eaten by the Santals all are not associated with clan-names such as the Frog, Gibbon, Elephant, Dog, etc.

771 If the religion of the Santals may thus be described 776 as veneration of a Supreme Being and reverential awe

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III

(a) Raranic or Herb-Doctor.

In his individual ailments the Santal recognises the disease to be due to either of the three causes as mentioned by Dr. Clements,[1] such as :

1. Natural causes,
2. Human agencies,
3. Supernatural agencies,

Naturally different functionaries are called upon to remedy the different items.

The man called upon to treat the diseases due to natural cause is the Raranic who comes nearest to our modern practising physician. He is a master of many herbs and simples. Like the modern physician he has faith in his drugs and herbs and looks askance on the practices of the spirit doctor or Ojha and his hocus-pocus. He learns his trade as an apprentice to an old practising Raranic who jealously guards the secrets of his herbs and prescriptions. They say that their knowledge is derived mostly by observation of animals attacked with disease and the way these cure themselves. He follows the diseased animal in the jungle and marks the herbs or roots From the encyclopaedic list of prescriptions collected by Rev. P.O. Bodding and Mrs. Bodding, M.B., one would infer that the Santal medical treatment has not been entirely conservative. There are indeed several items which could be taken as survival of primitive prescriptions such as the use of animal refuse or insect preparation, reminding us of the cauldron of Macbeth's witches.

[1] Forrest E. Clement's Primitive Concepts of Disease. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, p. 186, Volume 32, No. 2, pp. 185, 252, year 1932.

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When I saw the jet-black people, with a necklace of white beads about their necks, and their peculiar dress, if dress it might be called, I was more confirmed in my opinion. I immediately alighted from my horse and inquired if that was a village of the Coles, but was not a little surprised at being so soon transported from the Oriyas to a people who could not understand a word I said. I looked about with astonishment at the romantic change, till at length I found an old man who could speak broken Oriya, of whom I gained the following information. He said they were not Coles, but Santals."[1] The author of the *Annals* relied largely on information supplied to him by the Rev. Jeremiah Phillips, who was a pioneer in the study of the language. The following occurs in the Annual Report of the mission for the year 1846: "During the past year Brother Phillips has acquired some knowledge of the language of this people (the Santals), by which he has been able to commence efforts for their improvement, which it is believed will result in great good to this hitherto neglected portion of the inhabitants of Orissa. He has performed a journey of some two or three weeks among them, which was very serviceable and interesting to him. He has published a tract of 8 pages, which is the first work ever published in the Santal dialect."

The Santals have been living in South-West Bengal for at least three hundred years. It is probable that they have been there for about five hundred years. There is agreement among the authorities that they moved to their present sites from the more hilly districts of Chota Nagpur farther west. It has been computed that the village of Rangibari in Bankura district is over three hundred years old.[2] Such a long period of residence on the one site is exceptional; the great majority of the Santal villages of today cannot look back on so long a history. Wherever a tradition regarding the founders of a village has survived, one finds that the first settlers moved to their present abode from no great distance away. Regarding Barikul, we are told: "The one who tied the brown hen here was Haru Mañjhi, whose family came first from Aurasuri in Bogri—a distance of about thirty-five miles. They say that formerly there were many wild elephants in Bogri, and for fear of the elephants many of the inhabitants fled to other parts. Sorup and Haru

[1] This and the following quotation I owe to the kindness of the Rev. A. A. Berg, who enabled me to see early reports in his possession.

[2] M. C. McAlpin, *A Report on the Condition of the Santals in the Districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore and North Balasore*, IV (20), Bengal Government, 1909.

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Sorup and Haru Mañjhi were two brothers. Sorup Mañjhi left Bogri because of the elephants, came to Raipur and settled. He had established himself well at the end of a year or two, so he told his younger brother: 'Leave Bogri, where the elephants are on the increase. Some day you will be trampled on and killed. Come with me.' Haru Mañjhi thought to himself: 'True enough, many men have been killed; perchance they will kill me.' Thinking thus, he took all his children, left Bogri and came to Raipur. From Rautora in Raipur they established a village in Barikul, Sorup Mañjhi saying to his brother: 'Go to, brother, put up your huts and stay at Barikul.' Then Haru Mañjhi went out with his children, his cattle and his goats, and built his huts there. He had four boys and two girls; the girls they brought with them from Bogri, and the four boys were born in Barikul. He obtained sons-in-law for his daughters to live with them, and one or two tenants came together. In this way the village increased to many houses." Wild elephants, of which there are not so many now as formerly, do still on occasion cause great damage to ripening crops. Barikul was founded five generations ago, a period of about one hundred years. At that time there was also a possibility that by moving his abode the Santal could regain a measure of independence. The Santals have been spoken of as formerly "nomadic".[1] It may be that in the strict sense of the word they were in some remote period nomads. For any period of which we have record, however, they have been agriculturalists, though food-gathering and hunting provide them with important subsidiary occupations. Their migrations have been due to pressure of one kind and another. They prefer to move to forest lands where they will have a hard struggle to establish new settlements than to remain where they have to defend their holdings and their livelihood against hostile forces, whether these be wild animals, malignant actions directed against individuals or the community from the unseen world, or the oppression of landlords and moneylenders.

The last cause operated to produce a great northward movement in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and finally goaded them into rebellion. The Santal rebellion has been frequently described.[2] It took place in an area remote from the Bankura district, but it has to be mentioned because it created

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Santal Parganas*, ed. L. S. S. O'Malley, Calcutta, 1910.

[2] J. H. Hutton, *Modern India and the West*, ed. L. S. S. O'Malley, Oxford, 1941. Chapter on the Primitive Tribes, pp. 417–44. Also bibliography.

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and legends of Hinduism. The linguistic evidence shows how their material culture has been vitally affected and has some bearing on the more elusive realm of thought and belief. The grammatical structure of Santali has little in common with that of the Indo-Aryan tongues. It is an agglutinative and not an inflectional language. There have, however, been large and extensive borrowings of words. An instructive example can be taken from their method of husking rice. The term *ḍhinki*, used for a foot-pedal rice husker, has been borrowed from Bengali, and a *ḍhinki* is found in almost every home. The rice that is husked at the time of making sacrifices must be prepared in the home of the village priest, and in its preparation the use of the older and more primitive *ukhuṛ* is obligatory. This is a wooden mortar in which the rice is husked by hand with a wooden pestle, or *tok*. Both these words are Austro-Asiatic in origin. It is likely that when the household adopted the new method of husking rice the tribe did not change over from the old method of husking the sacred rice for fear of a loss in efficacy. One reason given is that as the *ḍhinki* is operated by the foot, rice husked in the *ḍhinki* is unclean and so unfit for offering to the spirits. It may be that the association of a mortar and pestle with sexual symbolism enhanced its magical value. The symbolism in this case is familiar to the Santal mind, for one way of expressing differences of sex is to refer to boys as "pestles" and to girls as "mortars". The *ukhuṛ* has to be used by the medicine man in preparing remedies; it is also used at marriages, when the feet of the bridegroom's party are washed over an *ukhuṛ*, and an *ukhuṛ* filled with water is required during the death ceremonies. In Bengal the rice which forms the daily food of the people is boiled before husking, and the Santals follow the same method in preparing it; but the rice used in sacrifices, *aḍwa caole*, is never so treated, being dried in the sun.

Among their domestic animals, the fowl, the dog and the goat have non-Bengali names, while the names for pigeons, sheep, pigs and, most important of all, their cattle are borrowed. Fowls, goats and pigs are all used in their sacrifices. In the realm of wild life the Santal has found little need to borrow a vocabulary from his neighbours. Wild animals, birds, trees and shrubs, many fish and insects, also snakes, have Santali names. The same is true of most of the weapons used in hunting. Although the term *for* paddy is Santal, the names of all the implements now used in rice cultivation and the terms for the

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614 one of the original twelve *khût*. They are not allowed to have
614 spots made on them and they will not be vaccinated, but they
784 may be cicatrized; however, their daughters and sisters are not
[304] allowed to be tattooed until after they are married. The un-
[291] married men are not allowed to wear any garment made from
[342] jute. They must not plaster their houses with any other than
[531] white earth; and they may not draw any pictures on the walls
[532] except plantain trees and date palms or figures that look like
782 pictures of temples, drawn with three fingers only. They make
614 their sacrifice at the time of the *Sohrae*; this is performed in the
house, and they sacrifice a pig. One year it must be a male un-
castrated pig and the next year a female, and if for any reason
they cannot get hold of a pig they may sacrifice a black hen.
[825] They should sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit in the shelter of a
[178] white ant hill,[1] but in these days they bring some earth from the
ant hill into the house and sacrifice there."

614 In a Sarenga schoolboy's essay on the origin of his own clan,
773 he began by relating the creation of mankind and finally con-
[15] tinued: "All the Sorens were the soldiers of the Kisku, who were
the owners of the village at Campa Gaṛ. The Maṛṇḍi lived at
Cirunala, and between the two villages there flowed the Sitanala
river. They began to quarrel with each other because the people
of the two villages had to use the same river for bathing and for
drinking water. Now, since the Soren were the soldiers of the
Kisku, they are like the Gurkhas of Nepal. Just as the Gurkhas
are fierce and do not fear death, so too the Soren." So is virtue
614 inculcated by fostering pride in the clan. One of the sub-clans
[192] of the Soren is the Poita Soren. *Poita* is the word—as pro-
nounced by the Santals—for the sacred thread of the Brahmin.
[173] They relate that in the very early days the ancestors of the
Soren were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and some of the
company began to prepare the food and cook it. In imitation of
Brahmin cooks they put on sacred threads and served all the
people. From that time they became known as Poita Soren.
[782] When they sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit they sacrifice to him
alone, and the offering has to consist of a male uncastrated pig.
The rite is performed at sunrise. They may eat the flesh at any
time during that day and the following night, and if they are
unable to finish it before the following sunrise

[171] [1] For references to the sanctity of white ant hills see *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, by W. Crooke, C.I.E., p. 380. The belief is widespread in India. "From early times the earth from an ant hill has been regarded as specially pure, representing 'the savour of the earth', and it was, and is, used in building altars."

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they are touching the blue eggs of the *jihu* bird. The Hâsdâk' do not even touch a goose, and they will not take water from a tank in which geese or ducks are swimming at the time. Binu used to say that he had to perform four different sub-clan sacrifices. To two of the spirits pigs were sacrificed in the cowshed at the time of the *Sohrae*, to another spirit they sacrificed a goat in the house at the end of the *Sohrae*, and to the fourth they sacrificed a ram on the open land outside the village at the time of the Spring festival. The Kaṛwar Hâsdâk' tell the story of how long ago their ancestors were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and all the Hâsdâk' were present. They had performed the sacrifices and everyone had been served with rice and meat, but some of the younger folk present felt that they had not been given enough to eat, so they killed a buffalo and served that as well. The family of the one who slew the buffalo, or *kaḍa*, became known as Kaṛwar Hâsdâk'. They sacrifice a pig, a white hen and a brown hen at the time of the *Sohrae*; the rite is performed inside the house at sunset, and they must finish eating the flesh during the night, burying whatever is left over in the dung heap. The Hatibaṛi[1] Hâsdâk' sacrifice either a white hen or a ram to their sub-clan spirit. This should be done out in the open beside a white ant hill, but, like some others, they now bring a piece of earth from the ant hill into their cowshed. Like the Nij Maṛndi, of whom this is also true, they may not be vaccinated, but their womenfolk may be tattooed.

The Jihu Hâsdâk' are not allowed to brand their cattle. There seems little reason to doubt the fact that most of the clans use distinctive marks in branding their cattle. Bodding has affirmed of the *dhera dag*, or cross, that although it is used as a mark of ownership of cattle "it is not restricted to any sept or sub-sept".[2] (The word "clan" has been adopted in this book in preference to "sept".) In the Bankura district, however, many of the branding marks are definitely associated with the clans, and the marks correspond to those recorded by Charulal Mukherjea in Mayurbhanj.[3] The marks printed on the opposite page have been noticed in Bankura.

The Guą or Betel nut Hembrom constitute one of the most numerous of the Hembrom sub-clans. Of them it is said that "a few days after the ancestors had been divided into clans, one of the Hembrom was born at the foot of a betel nut tree. When he

[1] Literally "elephant house", but the name may refer to a locality.
[2] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 472.
[3] Charulal Mukherjea, *The Santals*, p. 77.

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the *Sakrat*. At this time offerings are made to the ancestors in each house, and the celebration is accompanied by a display of stick dancing, which has replaced the former "sword and shield" dance. At the end of the following month the *Mag Sim*, the hen at the end of the month of *Mag*, is offered. In former times the village officials used to resign at this time and could be either replaced or reappointed, but the only relic of the old practice that has survived is that the headman has to treat the whole village to beer. Contracts with servants are renewed during the festival, and they receive the cloth that is always a part of the contract. In connection with rice cultivation there is the *Erok' Sim*, the hen that is offered at the time of sowing, and *Nawai*, when the first fruits of the first rice crop are offered in the sacred grove. Before this takes place the new rice must not be eaten. The village priest cuts the first handful of the crop and offers some at the foot of each of the chief trees. A sprig is also tied round the trunk of the trees and remains there. While the prayer is being said, milk is poured on the offering. After the priest has done his part, similar offerings are made in every house to the house spirits and the ancestors, the rice being taken from the crops belonging to the family. In varying degrees the Santals share in some of the festivals and practices of the low-caste cultivators around them. In the early monsoon days, during the period of *Rohini*, which is an auspicious time for sowing rice, they make a mark round their houses with cowdung as a protection against snakes. The snake goddess festival occurs in late August, and although its observance is not widespread among the Santals there are some local celebrations, especially when there is an *ojha* in the village. The *ojhas* all keep this festival, and others go to them at this time to ask for medicines against snakebite. Some Hindu festivals, as we have seen, furnish the occasion for large gatherings of Santals. At Sarenga, in addition to the Lakshmi Puja, a somewhat smaller gathering takes place during the hot weather in connection with the celebration of the Siva Gajon at a local temple. At this time the Charak, or hook-swinging festival, otherwise known as the *Pata*, takes place. The practice has almost died out within the last fifteen years. It had been prohibited by the government, but as long as the old generation, which was accustomed to the practice, remained it continued with gradually diminishing fervour. The Santals gather now to sing and to dance. They also join the throngs of pilgrims, sightseers and traders who collect at the Bogri *mela*, or fair,